

ORNITHOLOGICAL LITERATURE

AMERICAN BIRD SONGS. Recorded by the Albert R. Brand Bird Song Foundation, Laboratory of Ornithology, Cornell University. Released by Comstock Publishing Co., Cornell Heights, Ithaca, N.Y. 1942. Six standard, ten-inch, double disks in album. \$5.00 postpaid.

Here are the bird song recordings that ornithologists have been waiting for. Their appetites whetted by the two earlier (1934, 1936) offerings of bird song recordings by Albert Brand and his associates, bird students will get real satisfaction from this splendid series of six standard double-faced records of the songs and instrumental music of 72 species of North American birds. The species range from common birds of the East to West Coast species like the Wren-tit and California Thrasher and from the drumming of the Ruffed Grouse to the cacophonous chorus of Texas Chachalacas.

There is, naturally, some variation in the perfection of the recording and a few species are somewhat marred by an obtruding background of mechanical sound caused, perhaps, by too great amplification of the original recording. However, other songs, such as the thrushes, orioles, and the Mockingbird, are remarkably perfect. In any case it will repay the bird student to experiment a little with different phonographs and even different needles and adjustments of any single machine. Under the best possible conditions of reproduction these records give an astonishingly good rendition of bird song.

The Albert R. Brand Bird Song Foundation has indeed presented us with a remarkable new means of facilitating bird study. No longer need the student spend years, for example, tracing for himself and attempting to remember and compare the songs of the Veery, the Olive-backed, the Hermit, and the Wood Thrush; now he need merely run the Brand record a few times and compare directly these authentically labeled, excellent renditions of all four species.—J. Van Tyne.

WISCONSIN BIRDS. A PRELIMINARY CHECK LIST WITH MIGRATION CHARTS. By N. R. Barger, Elton E. Bussewitz, Earl L. Loyster, Sam Robbins, Walter E. Scott. Wisconsin Society of Ornithology. 1942. 32 pp. \$.25 of Earl L. Loyster, Care of Wis. Conservation Dept., State Office Building, Madison, Wis.

This very useful publication provides additional evidence of the great increase in active ornithological work now taking place in Wisconsin. The last complete work on Wisconsin birds appeared in 1909 and the need for a new one is great. The present list will temporarily fill that gap and will stimulate and guide much of the work that is necessary before an adequate new book can be prepared.

The arrangement of this list is rather novel. The greater part consists of a series of tables on the even pages which list the names of the 366 forms recognized as occurring in Wisconsin and gives a very brief summary of their status, followed by a chart showing the seasonal distribution of records. On the opposite page one finds the same species listed and space provided for recording the numbers of each found on 10 field trips. The rigidity of this scheme results in the providing of places for future listing of some extinct or extirpated birds but the amount of space thus wasted is not great. From the introduction we learn that 228 forms have been found breeding in Wisconsin but it is not possible to recognize all of them on the tabular list.

There are some small, obvious slips like the listing of "Turkey Vulture, species undetermined," but these are few.

Except for one footnote, scientific names are not given but the authors state that they have followed the A. O. U. Checklist nomenclature.

A modified Life Zone map of the state appears on the back cover but is not referred to in the text. The paper concludes with a properly conservative hypothetical list of 27 forms and a bibliography of about 70 titles.—J. Van Tyne